

AGENDA ITEM VI A through E

REQUEST TO OFFER EXISTING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THROUGH DISTANCE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Master of Education - Concentration in Adult Education

Master of Education - Concentration in Educational Technology

Associate of General Studies

Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (R.N. to B.S.N.)

**Registered Radiologic Technologist to Bachelor of Science in Radiologic
Technology (R.T. to B.S.R.T.)**

STAFF COMMENT

Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures Section 2.12 - Delivery of Academic Programs Through Distance Learning Technologies requires state colleges and universities that propose to offer more than 50% of an existing degree program through distance learning technologies to first seek Board of Regents' approval before submitting a request for authorization through the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The policy states that the following planning and quality issues must be satisfactorily addressed:

Planning

1. Appropriateness to stated role, scope, and mission;
2. Unnecessary program duplication;
3. Consistency with the desegregation Settlement Agreement; and
4. Funding provisions of Academic Affairs Policy 2.4 - Letters of Intent.

Quality

1. Adequacy of necessary infrastructures and resources;
2. Consistent of program design with that offered on campus; and
3. Appropriateness of the curricular format.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Planning Issues

All of the aforementioned, existing academic programs are appropriate to the role, scope, and mission of the University. Program duplication is not a relevant issue, and the Desegregation Settlement Agreement does not make any provisions for the development of any similar and/or related programs at the state's predominantly black institutions of higher education. No additional state funding will be required to offer the program electronically.

Quality Issues

The Staff asked the institution to provide information on how faculty in each of the programs have been/will be trained to utilize distance delivery mechanisms. The institution reported that faculty receive training through the Northwestern Electronic Learning Systems Trainer, a commercial agency, or by professional organization. The Northwestern training model provides instructors with a series of training modules focused on technology utilization. In addition, two systems administrators who assist with course development and technical issues provide faculty members with support. The University attests that its training staff is committed to providing faculty with essential course components as well as follow-up support to ensure a secure foundation for the delivery of coursework that will maintain the academic integrity of the University's Electronic Learning Initiative. The courses associated with all of these degree programs will be web-based and delivered via the Internet. Adequate technology is available on campus to offer the program. The content and design of the curriculum via distance learning will replicate that which is already offered on campus.

STAFF SUMMARY

Northwestern State University has successfully addressed requirements of Academic Affairs Policy 2.12. The staff, therefore, recommends approval of this request.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends approval for the request from Northwestern State University to offer the following existing academic programs through distance learning technologies:

- 1. Master of Education - Concentration in Adult Education;***
- 2. Master of Education - Concentration in Educational Technology;***
- 3. Associate of General Studies;***
- 4. Bachelor of Science - Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (R.N. to B.S.N.); and***
- 5. Registered Radiologic Technologist to Bachelor of Science in Radiologic***

Technology (R.T. to B.S.R.T.)